

For an article I'm developing on media production, I'm interested in reading work in political economy in the large sense and specific case studies which seem notable or excellent about the situation of artisanal production and consumption of artisan products and services under neoliberalism.

Given the decline in manufacturing in the US in particular, and the growing gap between the rich and everyone else, I'm trying to think about how specialized "handcrafted" production and niche market consumption operate in the arts in general. As an example: while mass production mass market beer exists, there is also brew-pub and other micro brewing that goes on, often hooked into ideas of validating craft and authenticity and ingenious innovation. Even large scale brewers try to ensure "authenticity" in part of their production by showing their "experts" brewers at work or enjoying a glass (e.g. Sam Adams commercials). In the Pacific Northwest where I now live people are often strongly vocal about their locavore tastes and practices. (Well parodied in the premier Portlandia TV show with diners wanting to know the provenance of the "natural and organic" chicken they are about to order for dinner.)

I think there are many different cases that could be considered (tourist art, tattoo art, high end ecotourism, etc.) but I'm especially concerned with not only how publics/markets exist with differentiation (the terrain of Bourdieu's Distinction) but especially how artists/artisans begin to enter such niches and how their recognition that this might be a source of steady income then shapes their production and imaginative work.

How do people go from home brewing or home baking to a start up small business?

Do you have an email address for Ben Scott who wrote on megabeer in your anthology? Has she thought/written about craft brewing?

From: "Feffer, Andrew" <feffera@union.edu>

Subject: Artisan production

Date: August 19, 2012 2:11:48 PM PDT

To: "chuckkle@northwestern.edu" <chuckkle@northwestern.edu>

Chuck

Have you looked at anything by Sharon Zukin? Cultures of Cities includes something on boutiques and restaurants in a dual cities environment. She has some recent articles out on the marketing of authenticity.

Good luck.

Cheers,

Andy

Andrew Feffer
Associate Professor, History
Co-Director, Interdepartmental program in Film Studies
Union College
Schenectady, NY
feffera@union.edu
(518) 388-6787 (office)
(518) 388-6422 (fax)
(518) 388-6220 (History Department)